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STATE UNIVERSITY
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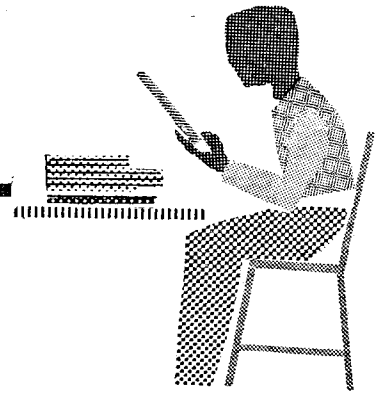

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A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

MR. KHRUSHCHEV ON TOUR

DURING HIS FIRST week in the United States, Nikita Khrushchev alternately cajoled and bullied, boasted and threatened. He described Hollywood's can-can dancers as pornographic, twitted Capitalist Nelson Rockefeller about his Presidential chances, raged because "they" would not allow him to go to Disneyland, patted children on the head, talked about the horrors of war, and boasted about Russia's lead over the United States in the field of intercontinental missiles. Day in and day out the Russian leader demonstrated that he is indeed what close observers of the Russian scene have long reported: a forceful, dedicated, unpredictable, almost pathologically suspicious and very dangerous man.

The Russian Premier may be a ham, but he is no comedian. He is not used to questioning, and he angers easily. And when he does lose his temper, the picture he presents is not attractive (Hungary is "a rat in some people's throats"—freedom inside Russia is of no concern to anyone else—U.S. labor leaders form a "capitalist cadre").

Questions of personality to one side—and this is enormously difficult, for Mr Khrushchev comes close to being the Soviet State at this time—is the Soviet Premier here to negotiate an easing of cold-war tension? On the basis of the evidence so far, the answer has to be no. Mr. Khrushchev likes communication, but only from him to us; he likes to interrupt, but not be interrupted; he likes to heckle, but not be heckled. He likes give-and-take, but only if he gives and his hearers take.

These are depressing judgments, even if they must wait for testing at Camp David. They are inevitable, however, in view of Mr. Khrushchev's remarks about Berlin, his refusal to discuss Laos with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, his misleading and deceptive comments on trade and cultural exchanges. On all these subjects the Russian leader has followed the traditional Soviet line, with no indication at all that he is prepared to modify these positions for the sake of easing international tensions.

More than any of these things, however, Mr. Khrushchev's speech to the United Nations on disarmament was most discouraging. The burden of armaments weighs heavily on the people of the world and for many the cost of arms represents the difference between grinding poverty and the possibility of decent comfort. Even more importantly, the present arms race imposes upon all mankind a terrible burden of fear which is well nigh intolerable. In view of all this, the major portion of Mr. Khrushchev's U.N. speech can only be counted as a calculated effort to exploit real fears and noble aspirations for his own purposes.

IN DISCUSSING Mr. Khrushchev's disarmament proposal, it is obvious that Secretary of State Christian Herter and other American officials fear the Soviet maneuver will have great propaganda effect throughout Asia and Africa; their comments have therefore been guarded, lest they give the impression that the United States is opposed to disarmament. But the fact is that Premier Khrushchev's sweeping proposal of complete and total disarmament in four years' time is absolutely impossible. Armies and navies, air forces and missiles, rockets and nuclear bombs, general staffs and military colleges—these will not be abolished in four years' time, and probably not in forty, for that matter. Mr. Khrushchev knows that, as everyone who knows anything about disarmament knows it.

We cannot accept the argument that the Russian Premier performed a useful service by holding up a great ideal for us to aim at. Rather, he advanced a

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completely impossible scheme to disguise the fact that the Soviet Union has been unwilling to proceed with even a relatively simple agreement to end nuclear testing. And thus his remarks on disarmament have dashed to the ground any hope some may have entertained for a real end to the arms race.

When President Eisenhower invited the Russian Premier to this country, he must have done so with only limited goals in mind. We could reasonably look, not for total disarmament, but for some kind of sensible negotiation on Berlin; not for the dismantlement of the machinery of international Communism, but for frank discussion of Laos; not for an immediate end to repression behind the Iron Curtain, but for improvement of the flow of information and cultural exchanges. No one of these is too ambitious, but unless Mr. Khrushchev changes his tune very radically when he confers with the President, there is nothing to indicate that the achievement of even such limited goals is possible. As President Eisenhower prepares for his visit to the U.S.S.R., then, it is imperative that we follow the words of one of Mr. Khrushchev's own Russian proverbs and "eat the bread and salt [of hospitality] but speak our mind."

UNPRODUCTIVE FIRST HALF

FEW CRITICS of the Eighty-sixth Congress would deny that our Senators and Representatives manfully stuck it out through one of Washington's most sweltering summers. Perhaps our national legislators would still be at it were it not for Nikita Khrushchev. But once they have received due credit for their doggedness in remaining at their posts there is little else to praise.

It was a predominantly Democratic Congress which took office last January after a sweep at the polls. If ever a group of newly elected (and re-elected) representatives had a mandate it was this one. The vote, last November, was widely viewed as a popular protest against official neglect of a series of national and world needs which has been developing in the past six years of Republican Administration. Hopes for the Eighty-sixth Congress were high; in this session its constructive accomplishments have been inconsequential.

Early in the session it became fairly easy to see what was happening. Conservative Southern Democrats and Old Guard Republicans were working together with telling effect. Senator Lyndon Johnson, vociferously espousing a policy of moderation and working most effectively behind the scenes among both Congressional veterans and neophytes, was winning plaudits from all sides for his success in directing things. He won especial praise for his ability to conciliate the White House, for his formula of "veto-proof" legislation.

For this reason it is rather startling to find the Senator and Mr. Eisenhower now seemingly at odds over the failings and accomplishments of the Eighty-sixth Congress. The President appears exercised mainly about the session's effect on immediate and future budget-balancing—with the one exception of the sizable cut the legislators made in his Mutual Aid funds. Senator Johnson expresses indignation over this criticism of a record in which he takes some pride. But whatever their differences on certain details, the outlines of their respective programs for the nation at this stage of the cold war seem remarkably alike. Why all the shooting?

Meanwhile there are many reasons for concern: the state of our national defenses; the costly slums in our major cities still largely neglected; the increase in the number of high-unemployment areas; the government's increasing difficulty in borrowing; the inadequacy of America's technical aid abroad —and further postponement on civil rights legislation. Can it be said that either Republican Administration or Democratic Congress has been rising to its responsibilities?

NEW PLAN FOR ALGERIA

PRESIDENT de Gaulle's proposal for ending the Algerian war is fully satisfactory to none of the parties involved; yet, marvelous to relate, neither is it totally unacceptable to any of these groups. De Gaulle called first for immediate peace. He pledged a free vote for the Algerian people, within a maximum of four years after the cessation of hostilities, to choose one of three forms of political organization—independence, integration or autonomy within a French framework.

The de Gaulle speech represented independence as a calamitous idea, predicting "appalling misery" and "political chaos" in Algeria if the choice were to sever all ties with France. Furthermore, President de Gaulle hinted at a partitioning of Algeria to protect those (the *colons*) who would elect to remain French, and he declared that France would in any case retain control of the Sahara and its oil.

It is true that these qualifications to the idea of independence, the goal for which the Algerians have been fighting since 1954, make the new offer far less than the rebels are demanding, but for the

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Paris government to admit any possibility of independence for Algeria is a new and important development.

And while the mere suggestion of independence is bitterly disapproved by the French Algerian *ultras,* they are now without the support of the army and, it appears, will mount no threat to the stability of de Gaulle's Fifth Republic. The power of the *ultras* in 1958, when they contributed largely to the fall of the Fourth Republic, depended chiefly on their alliance with embittered army leaders. President de Gaulle has been able to win over the army to his own more flexible position, and his new formula—peace first and self-determination later—avoids any appearance of surrender to the rebels.

Integration with France, the status for Algeria insisted upon by the *colons* and by French rightists generally, was presented as a possible choice in President de Gaulle's plan, but he displayed no enthusiasm for it. The solution to the Algerian impasse he clearly would prefer is some kind of autonomy, described by him as "government of Algerians by Algerians, backed up by the help of France and in close union with her for economic affairs, education, defense, foreign relations." The all-important details of such an arrangement remain, however, problems to be worked out.

De Gaulle's proposals will obviously not at a stroke establish peace and harmony in Algeria. Indeed the best that can be hoped for is that they will serve as groundwork for future progress toward peace. Nevertheless, granting all the difficulties and dangers yet to be faced, President de Gaulle has unquestionably improved a situation which only a few weeks back looked very nearly hopeless. This much, under the circumstances, is a great deal to have accomplished.

CHINA'S CONTINUING STRUGGLE

ONCE AGAIN, the news from China is that of turmoil and dissension. While the nation's attention is focused, properly enough, on the U.S.-Communist conflicts which are now so sharply personalized by the Russian Premier, Communist China advances, apparently, on her troubled way.

The relations between Russia and Communist China have been matters of teasing speculation for some time. The most optimistic forecast is that Russia and China will gradually see each other as bordering foes rather than as neighboring friends. The balance of forces would then, it is posited, force Russia to ally herself, to some degree, with the Western powers. This could only happen, of course, if China were to become a threat to Russian Communist leadership.

In one of his exchanges Mr. Khrushchev stated flatly that he thought the United States would take third place to China's second, the Soviet Union, of course, being first. There can be no doubt that China is exerting great efforts to become a leading world power, to speak with a commanding voice.

In the process of "growing up," however, China has experienced more than normal growing pains. In a few short years there has been time for several visions and revisions. In a burst of liberalization not long ago, Mao Tse-tung urged the people to "let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred ideas contend," but some species were soon found undesirable and their heads were lopped off. Then great production gains in agriculture and industry were announced and the new goals were raised yet higher. A more sober appraisal, however, lowered the estimation of what had been produced.

Now, following hard upon the admission of the revised figures, there is news of a reshuffle in top positions. No one suggests that continual forced changes in top leaders are a sign of strength. The reverse is more nearly true. Yet the harsh pattern which is forming in China much resembles that which so long prevailed in Russia.

In order to build its industrial capacity the U.S.S.R. drew not upon capital, which it did not have, but upon the blood, sweat and lives of the people, who were considered to be expendable. The present, highly developed technological society of Russia cannot allow us to look upon the struggles of Communist China with a complacent eye.

INCIDENTAL INFORMATION

THE JAPAN Tourist Association recently sent us one of the most pleasant releases we have received. Calling our attention to an error in a previous release, it read:

"Two normally eagle-eyed proofreaders at our mailing service failed to spot the 'crows' attending the Matsukata Art Collection in Tokyo.

"The word should, of course, have read 'crowds.' . . . 'The crowds are drawn by the early giants of modernism—Monet, Picasso, Gaugin. . . . '

"We sincerely regret any inconvenience caused by this inadvertent error."

We were particularly pleased by the "inadvertent error," the only kind we allow into our own pages.

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Religion in the State University

Are men who hold religious convictions most earnestly capable of giving them academic treatment?

by GERARD S. SLOYAN

THE EUROPEAN university, medieval and Christian in its origins, is largely unfamiliar with the study of religion apart from its faculty of theology. Once a student has concluded his formal religious education in confessional *lycée, Gymnasium,* or other secondary institution, his intellectual training in religion is at an end. He may continue with full religious practice at the university, but any synthesis between faith and reason in his professional or humanistic studies is largely his own doing.

In the United States and Canada (to confine ourselves to the familiar) more ambitious attempts have been made to provide studies in religion at the college level. The offering of such programs was almost universal practice at a time when colleges were chiefly conducted by the various Protestant communions. During that period the need for a learned ministry was so widely acknowledged that Hebrew, Greek and even divinity studies were carried on with tax funds at state universities.

The gradual retirement of Protestant groups from administrative control of American colleges and the increasing entry of the Catholic Church into the field are facts too well known to be rehearsed. And quite apart from the Catholic entry, a certain bitterness among churches and individuals marked the transition, as for example between the fundamentalist and liberal groups. There were other important factors, of course. Among them were the growth in favor of the concept of public education through college years, and the judicious conversion of many colleges from church-affiliated to non-sectarian status in order to qualify for Carnegie pension and other such benefits.

In the present American situation a number of state constitutions and, as many are convinced, the federal constitution, forbid the teaching of religion with public moneys. This has caused higher education a few serious embarrassments. Not the least of them is the inability of college instructors to develop on even a modest scale certain great themes from literature, the fine arts and history because students know nothing of the Bible or Christianity. A knowledge of post-Biblical Judaism would be esoteric if familiarity with the more widespread religious suppositions of the West had not merited the palm.

For all of these reasons, and others, the University of Michigan and the National Council of Christians and Jews jointly held a "National Consultative Conference on Religion and the State University" at Ann Arbor on November 16-18, 1958. The occasion for the conference was the centennial celebration of student religious work at the University of Michigan. Representatives of one hundred twenty-seven colleges and universities from forty-three states attended. The distinctive feature of the meeting was that a volume of essays had been written and published in preparation for it.

THE BOOK was entitled *Religion and the State University* (University of Michigan Press. $6.50.) and was produced under the editorship of the Secretary of the Regents and the Secretary to the President of that University, Erich A. Walter. Eighteen other persons contributed, among them Professor William K. Frankena, who is chairman of Michigan's philosophy department. His concluding statement somewhat resembles Pusey's "olive branch discharged from a catapult," in Newman's phrase, for he argued that the neutrality incumbent on a state university as among religious and ultimate views all but precludes the teaching of these views by those committed to them. To Dr. Frankena's mind, such teaching is almost certain to comprise "inoculation or propagation" of the creed concerned; the Procrustean bed to which the "three major faiths" have been fitted does not become acceptable merely because the number of creeds propagated

Father Sloyan, editor of *Shaping the Christian Message,* is head of the Department of Religious Education at Catholic University of America.

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is so severely reduced. The principle is wrong, he says, whether three faiths are taught or thirty-three, plus agnosticism, Marxism and atheism to suit all possible consciences.

Dr. Frankena concludes that while a benevolent neutrality towards religion is improper and unallowable (the preference for religious to other forms of metaphysical or ultimate beliefs being as wrong for the state as religious indoctrination), a state university should aid students in the selection or formation of a philosophy or religion. This it can do best by finding the "right men" to serve as teachers, counselors and coordinators, that is, scholars whose objectivity is beyond question. They may exert a more positive personal interest on students' lives in extracurricular activities and discussions than in class, "so long as they make it clear that they are not acting in their official capacity." This policy of abstention from close interest in religious questions on the university's part is justified, says Frankena, from the fact that the family and the church have the competency and the responsibility to transmit a heritage of belief.

Looked at from another point of view, the question whether religion should be taught in the state university is entirely theoretical. It is being taught there. A question that immediately presents itself is, "Legally?" Most presidents and deans think they already have an affirmative answer to that one, and ask, "How can it be done most effectively?" A study reported last year by Seymour A. Smith, President of Stephens College, indicates that in 1955-56, ninety-seven per cent of the state universities offered religion courses in some department, and in seventy state universities an average of nine courses in religion was being offered. Considerable confusion attends these efforts, however. Many of the courses are make-shift arrangements or else fail to receive full academic recognition. Budget figures are frequently sub-par when it comes to financing religion courses, and deans affirm that such work is not always on an academic level with other disciplines. Despite all these handicaps, Mr. Herman C. Wornom, Executive Secretary of the Religious Education Association, reports that in extended visits to twenty state university campuses in 1955-57, the question most frequently put to him by deans and presidents was, "How can we teach religion better? Where do we recruit the professors?"

There does not seem to be much debate as to whether the ultimate questions and concerns of man should be raised in the state university classroom. All agree that certitude about man's destiny, free will, pain, the meaning of the universe, are topics that have a place there. The problem is: will a genuine search for truth ensue, or will unreflected answers be provided to students on terms radically different from those of the rational, disciplined inquiry into other matters that goes on there? Basically the question hinges on whether men who hold religious convictions most earnestly are capable of giving them academic treatment.

JOHN STUART MILL'S framing of the question in his inaugural address at St. Andrew's University is couched in a way highly suitable to moderns whose university careers are without a formal religious dimension.

Mill asked, "Why should it be impossible that information of the greatest value, on subjects connected with religion, should be brought before the student's mind; that he should be made acquainted with so important a part of the national thought, and the intellectual labors of past generations, as those relating to religion, without being taught dogmatically the doctrines of any church or sect?" Presumably teaching dogmatically meant to Mill in doctrinaire fashion, or simply presenting religious propositions "to be held," without any hint of how they first came to be believed, or what is their inner meaning or relation to the whole structure of human thought. If men of good will and equal ability have come to the widest diversity of opinion on religious matters, Mill maintained, there is everything to be said for a demonstration of how the variant results were arrived at.

This line of thought seems conducive to an impartial teaching "about religion" which is favored by many who are interested in state university education. The fair-minded academic person is not impossible to discover, they insist. Far from it. Let him describe the tenets of Roman Catholicism and Buddhism with exactness and sensitivity, just as he would those of Marxism if he happened to be on the political science faculty. He is, in fact, more fitted to the task in proportion as he is not committed, for the reason that unlike the thoroughgoing Communist, Quaker or Catholic who cannot but wish that his hearers should be of his persuasion, such a professor does not care. He wants comprehension, not commitment. Intelligent dialogue or discourse is much more apt to be forthcoming from such men, it is said, because they are as open to opposite positions as to the one they expound. Since the very essence of religious conviction is that all contrary claims are unconvincing to the believer, such claims are likely to receive from him either a hollow presentation or scant notice. This situation is intolerable in chemistry or history; therefore it should be so in religion.

It is true that American society, culturally and religiously pluralistic, has met some of its stiffest challenges through compromise, but the compromise has been political. Seldom have religious groups been forced to yield in matters of principle for the sake of achieving the political ideal. There is some feeling,

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however, that in higher education as it touches upon religious belief American society has *been* compromised. There exists the paradox of academic freedom in every area of human inquiry except (if certain philosophies of education are followed) the theological. In this realm American society has given to the universities it conducts for the people no mandate, or rather the mandate to abstain from theological discussion as part of their teaching function.

The acceptable alternative, namely of having the uncommitted expound the tenets and practices of the great religions dispassionately, has been described by religionists as taking theology out of the hands of trained men who might be presumed to know something about it and putting it into the hands of talented amateurs. Not so, comes the response. Need a man be successively a Platonist, Aristotelian, Stoic, Kantian and Hegelian to teach a course in the history of philosophy? No more, then, need he be Buddhist, Muslim or Christian to deal with those great traditions at the level of rational dialogue. Once a priest or ordained expositor of his religion's scriptures is engaged for this purpose, however, his first approach to his religion will be non-rational commitment. As a corollary of his office, there will be the felt mission to win disciples.

The major barriers to settlement of the question of religion study at the state university are two: one is the conviction, held on philosophic rather than legal grounds, that the American political system will not have it there. The other is that the academic fraternity will not have it there because it is foreign to the terms of their pursuit of truth.

COURSES in religion at the university level meet with no great legal difficulty in the greater number of states, provided they are optional with the student, that preference is not given to any single religious faith, and that they aim at understanding rather than indoctrination. Such is the opinion of Paul G. Kauper, Professor of Law at the University of Michigan. He points out that the "sectarian instruction" of the lower schools which has met with such setbacks in the courts is of another order. "The term acquired its chief significance as part of a move to keep the schools free of control by religious bodies and to avoid use of public school classes as a means of compelling indoctrination in the religious tenets of a specific religious faith." The Constitution of Wisconsin expressly forbids sectarian instruction at the university, Kauper points out. The Colorado and North Dakota Constitutions confine their prohibition to the public schools; Nebraska's and Montana's speak of all the educational institutions of the state, while Washington, Arizona and Utah prohibit the use of public funds "for any religious worship, exercise or instruction."

The First Amendment should present no obstacles to the sponsoring of religion courses by universities, Professor Kauper holds. It is surely indicative of something that there is a notable paucity of litigation and judicial opinion on the subject. In 1957 Professor Arthur E. Sutherland of the Harvard Law School wrote in the journal *Religious Education* that he knew of no case where a court had interfered with religious instruction at the college level. A suit against the University of Minnesota in 1953 came to nothing for procedural reasons, but it did give pause to numerous state university administrators. Finally, the view of Dr. Leo Pfeffer is worth citing. This constitutional lawyer, who directs the American Jewish Congress's Commission on Law and Social Action, wrote in his book *Church, State and Freedom* in 1953 that it would seem that tax-supported colleges may "constitutionally provide for the objective study of religious institutions, practices, and principles," though obviously it must be multisectarian and non-devotional.

The bold moves of the State University of Iowa in 1922-24 in setting up the School of Religion obviated certain constitutional problems by seeking donations for administrative costs from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and the support of professorships by Catholic, Protestant and Jewish groups. That school is so successful in its operation today that the persons associated with it tend to be impatient with others who raise theoretical difficulties in the matter. A difference is that Iowa has something that is not very easy to acquire, namely thirty-five years of peaceful experience at religion study on university terms.

University terms are, quite simply, the communication of an understanding which the lecturer possesses. He does not become better qualified in proportion as the inner consistency of his discipline eludes him. He is not kept from strong views in his courses. Students rather expect them. A man does not become a bad economist because he is a Keynesian or a bad exponent of literature because he follows the new criticism. If he believes in and teaches Marxism with public funds he will be halted for advocating the violent overthrow of government sooner than he will be stopped for his Marxist theorizing. The state university professor who is an evolutionary materialist is, in the strict sense, a "public enemy" only when students are not free to

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elect against studying under him. If five hundred of them must take his Sociology 1-2 as a condition of earning their degrees, this compulsion to submit to hearing his views comprises an offense to their consciences and often their reasoning powers.

Conceivably a course in a religious system could be taught, by one who believed in it, with such fair-mindedness that no compulsory auditor would feel offended in anything but the compulsion that placed him there. Such, however, is not the state university's problem. It has the far less delicate task of providing academic courses in religion to people who are for them. The present resistance to the notion will allow courses in the Psychology of Religion or Comparative Religion without blinking an eye, but will forbid great theologians and religious thinkers access to the classroom because they are so unmistakably committed to a view. Departments of "philosophy and religion" exist (primordial confusion!) in which no professor is clearly identified with a religious system, holding all that it holds as a necessary condition of plumbing its deeper meanings.

THE ALTERNATIVE to this pallid state of affairs, calculated to impoverish human thought, would seem to be to put the theologian in the theologian's chair (or rabbi, as it may be); not the homilist, the shepherd of souls nor the theological bully, but the theologian. This means a trained scholar who is fit for the work of university education. Not all graduates of theological seminaries are automatically disqualified—a popular view. A university education which will have provided some academic experiences outside of an exclusively theological milieu would seem to qualify a person in a special way.

The university has from its inception been a little world of its own. It has its canons of deportment, its *lingua franca,* its competency, which is precisely one that church and family do not have in their ordinary care for their subjects. Even the Church-sponsored university is an extraordinary means. The university's sensibilities need to be attended to if the values it watches over and the learnings it transmits are to survive. When it asks those who expound theology in it to students who are not preparing for the sacred ministry to do so in terms of relevance to the lives lay students are living, it asks something legitimate. The university cannot require theology to abdicate its principles or methods, but it can ask theologians to present their discipline more in the manner of the liberal arts than as professional preparation. (It may be noted, parenthetically, that Aquinas in his lifetime found no intellectual haven among the Faculty of Theology of Paris. They received the friar only when forced to it. The Faculty of Arts, contrariwise, was his champion in life and death.)

The dearth of laymen academically well-trained in the teachings of the Church provides a hardship to university administrators and Catholic bishops alike. The latter normally cannot spare clergy except for pastoral purposes; understandably they hesitate to create ambiguities in the minds of Catholics by seeking academic berths on state university faculties for their priests. The university takes the problem off their hands largely by not being interested in the priest-professor. The Newman chaplain they welcome; his privately conducted courses they fully expect. But as an academic person they have not sought him out, and they will no more have him thrust upon them than a bishop will have clergy thrust upon him by a zealous neighbor bishop.

Where can such laymen be trained, granted the need for their services by both academic community and Church? A man may study at any university theological faculty, European, Canadian or American, but he cannot escape the five- or six-year residence requirement after college for the Doctorate in Theology, nor the overwhelming clerical milieu. A woman may attend St. Mary's College School of Sacred Theology in South Bend, Indiana, and there earn the Ph.D. in Sacred Doctrine.

The present writer is associated with a department in a graduate faculty of arts open to both men and women which trains college teachers of sacred doctrine at the Ph.D. level. It is not the only such department in the country, and it hopes to be joined by still others very shortly. Successful candidates for the doctoral degree have until now been priests, religious brothers and sisters, with the exception of one layman (who teaches religion in a Catholic college).

The chief reasons for the lack of students until now has been the status of undergraduate studies in Catholic colleges, and the well-enough grounded suspicion that there were no good employment prospects in the field. Economic uncertainties apart, not many laymen have the call to be geese among swans. When one flies better than the swans (the geese have suspected), things do not get better, back on the pond.

Most of those thought categories, however, if not obsolete are obsolescent. The state and other universities are genuinely in search of Catholics who are theologically trained and who know the American university pattern. There simply has not been any such class of academics up until now.

Religion and the State University does not say that there are no more problems in the field. It raises some serious ones, and it does not come near settling them all. Some of the contributors are convinced that no solution can be arrived at that is not a threat to basic liberties. The problem outlined immediately above is one that is upon us now, however, and the solution to it cannot long be deferred.

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AN AMERICAN IN ITALY

Rome

AN AMERICAN CATHOLIC stopping in Italy is inevitably intrigued by the Catholicism he finds here. If one can distinguish between Catholicity, the universal faith, and Catholicism, the local manifestation of that faith, there is a vast difference between the Church as we know it at home and the Church here.

By all external observances, Americans would seem to be much more dutiful Catholics than their Italian brethren. Here the churches are vast and beautiful and, in Rome especially, startlingly numerous. But they are rarely crowded, as ours are Sunday after Sunday. As in other Latin countries, elderly female worshippers always predominate. I have never seen a congregation here as mixed as those we are used to, or, if the truth be spoken, as attentive.

It is also something of a shock to find a Catholic country where, at least in the places I have visited, observance of the Sabbath is taken so lightly. A few Sundays ago I spent the day in Naples. Stores, markets, even barber shops were all open for business. Last Sunday I visited Capri, and it was the same story all over again. Our American Sunday closing laws, about which so much controversy has been engendered lately, would probably strike the Italians as intolerable.

There is also the matter of Friday abstinence. The average Italian family, of course, cannot afford to eat meat as frequently as we do. For economic reasons alone, abstinence prevails several days a week. But where meat is served as a matter of course, as in restaurants, hotels, *pensiones* and dining cars, Friday is treated as just another day of the week. When Italians hear about the pains to which American Catholics go to avoid eating meat on Friday, they are sometimes edified but more often amused.

One more point may be worth mentioning. In America the size of one's family has become almost a touchstone for one's Catholicism. We have all those cynical little jokes—Catholic or careless? etc.—and the never-ending controversies which have succeeded in getting the Catholic Church identified as the anti-birth control Church. Perhaps that is why everyone at home expects a family like ours to be numerous and people seem usually to go out of their way to accept the fact with aplomb. But I have been taken aback that so many Romans marvel at the size of the Cogley family. We have only six children, which should really not call for gasps anywhere, but in Rome, a family of this size is considered very large. The average in this city runs considerably smaller.

These are only a few indications of the fact that when Italy is spoken of as a Catholic country, which it certainly is, one should not think of it as Catholic America writ large. The Catholicism of Italy is less a matter of observance than of a spirit that informs the nation. The Faith here is taken as naturally as breath and is worn as lightly as flesh. No one has been able to express this idea as well as Sean O'Faolain, whose book, *A Summer in Italy* (Devin-Adair), I have found very helpful on this trip. He writes:

"Elsewhere . . . it is the misery of Catholics to be still regarded as the ancient Romans regarded the early Christians, a body of people who can never be entirely trusted, since their higher loyalties, as with Communists, pass the bounds of country; as indeed they do and should do. This breeds in Catholics outside Italy a defensive or 'on guard' mentality which prevents their religion from being as unselfconscious as their nationality. Whereas, in Italy, if faith and fatherland are not absolutely identical they come as close to it as is humanly possible. This dear dotty Signor Cipolla was the first Catholic I had talked to who had not the outlook of a sectarian. . . . He was an Italian and a Roman and a Catholic and a skeptic and a citizen of the world, and yet he was unaware of any of these things, being all of them simultaneously and instinctively. In no other one of the three countries in which I have lived for any length of time, Ireland, England or America, have I found religion so limber and light-hearted. I never conceived it could be so. I fell in love with it on the spot. I wanted to possess it immediately."

In my travels in Italy I have met many Signor Cipollas. Though I despair of even succeeding in describing the texture of the Catholicism that is theirs, despite their habitual lapses, these encounters with it are enough to convince me that Italy, in its fashion, will remain forever true to the ancient Faith.

No one, least of all their clergy, would hold up Italian Catholics as models of behavior and religious observance for the Catholic world. Yet even the most unhappy pastor, I think, would defend the "Catholicity" of his Italy. In doing so he would have to defend this thing of the spirit, the product of history, culture, nature and grace, which permeates the land and its people. Even the atheists of Italy, they say here, will declare that there is no God but add quickly that Mary is His mother.

Catholicism of this sort can not be measured by confessional clickers, charts and graphs or even by parish statistics. But it is something, and the thing that it is—tenuous, subtle, intangible as air—makes Italy the most Catholic of nations. JOHN COGLEY.

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Genuine communication is impossible without mutual understanding

Education for the Dialogue

by SISTER JOAN BLAND

"PERHAPS," wrote Father John Courtney Murray in reference to contemporary America, "the time has come when we should endeavor to dissolve the structure of war that underlies the pluralist society, and erect the more civilized structure of the dialogue." Every member of a free society has a stake in the "dialogue," the continuing and amicable exchange of views. For those who believe they have the truth, nothing is so important as to disseminate it. For those who seek the truth (and surely we all have much to learn), communication, unimpeded by passion and prejudice, is equally desirable. This goal, so worthy of our striving, raises some questions for Catholic education—for educators, teachers and students—especially on the college level.

Should the climate of American society be somehow miraculously improved tomorrow, so that the "dialogue" would in fact replace the "war," would American Catholics, even our own college graduates, be psychologically prepared to make their contribution? Or might they fail, in large measure, to gain a hearing for divine truth? In other words, are we educating for the dialogue or for the war?

A dialogue is not a diatribe, not even an aggressive argument. It is "orderly conversation," an exchange of views in an atmosphere of courtesy and personal tolerance, in which the participants make an earnest effort to communicate effectively. There must, of course, be a sufficient measure of mutual understanding to make genuine communication possible. The process is most fruitful for those who comprehend the idiom of groups other than their own, who have arrived at some conception of why opponents find it possible to take, however incorrectly, the positions they do take.

Catholic educators, and indeed all educators, would seem to have every reason to be concerned about what the participants must bring to the dialogue. Obviously, in the first place, the educated Catholic of the future must bring to the dialogue the desire to communicate. The need to protect our young people from inimical influences must therefore be weighed in the balance with the danger of creating a ghetto mentality which will effectively prevent the development of any such desire.

NEXT, and equally obvious, is the fact that Catholic college students must have something to communicate, because their preparation both in sacred and in secular learning has been the best possible. This goal, which seems to preoccupy almost everyone in our collegiate circles, is accepted by all Catholic educators and striven for manfully in all Catholic colleges. If the achievement is well short of perfection, the fact is not so much attributable to attitudes as to obstacles which can only be overcome gradually, and which in fact are already being attacked with efforts which sometimes border on the heroic.

Much less attention has been given to another consideration, the need for an understanding of those to whom our students must someday address themselves and to whom it will be their duty, on occasion, to listen. The need to teach religious truth, for the sake of the student and for the sake of society, and above all in obedience to the divine command, may well necessitate sixteen years under Catholic teachers, which, in the nature of things, will be shared largely with Catholic companions. But what of the growing tendency to use only Catholic textbooks, reinforced by supplementary readings discreetly collected by Catholic scholars? What of college assignments, in such subjects as history and psychology, which consist entirely of materials which the students are expected to accept uncritically, because every breath of error has been prudently deleted from the pages by zealous educators?

Surely we do not wish our students, in their future reading, to approach the daily press, the best seller list, and all the omnipresent art of Madison Avenue with the same touching docility. And we cannot believe they will be prepared to meet the mind of the non-Catholic intellectual in the dialogue of the future if they have never met it before. In such a case his very idiom would be as incomprehensible to them as theirs is to him.

Clearly there are no completely black or white situations in Catholic education as regards this question. No faculty is totally unaware of the challenge; no faculty

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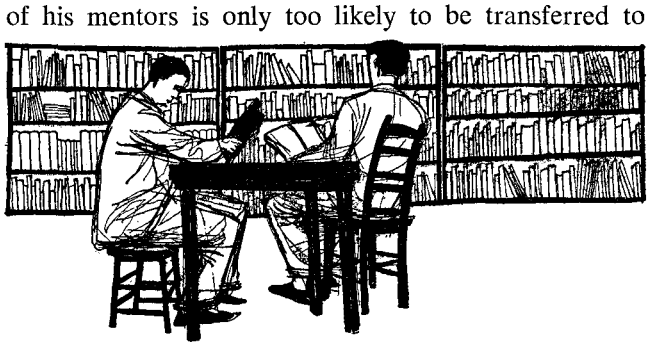
fails to realize that the issue is a complex one, with many variables. The maturity of the particular student group, the likelihood of their pursuing graduate study, the competence of the faculty member involved—these are only a few of the factors which demand consideration. But it is clear that we cannot afford to overlook the dialogue in our educational planning. We cannot afford to educate our students for life in an anchorhold. Recognition of this fact was behind the reaction of the freshman who remarked, after we had discussed thoroughly the viewpoint of the rationalist historian who wrote her textbook, "I'm so glad that when you get to college, Catholic education isn't afraid."

Possibly there are more Catholic educators facing up to this challenge—teaching students to understand the secular mind—than to the specific need of preparation for the dialogue. But it will not suffice just to understand the thinking of our fellow Americans. We must strive to prepare an atmosphere of courtesy and mutual respect. In this regard, the instructor's correction of errors regarding the teachings of the Church in non-Catholic sources should never assume bad faith in the authors. Would it not teach a salutary disrespect for the printed word to allow the student, where it is feasible, to discover these mistakes for himself? Should he fail to do so, they can be pointed out merely as evidence that all men are fallible, even great scholars. There need be nothing surprising about the fact that a gentleman who has never been exposed to Catholic education does not know his catechism.

On this score, we must at all costs avoid affirming in one breath that faith is a free gift of God for which we can claim no personal credit and in the next breath showing a complete incapacity to appreciate the achievements of anyone from whom the gift has so far been withheld.

WHAT IS unfortunately suggested by the chip-on-the-shoulder attitude occasionally found in Catholic educators is a deep insecurity, a fundamental weakness in trust, if not in faith. To do all one's reading of non-Catholic sources in a nervous search for bigotry is no more likely to produce the educated mind than to read in a nervous search for obscenity. A student so trained may become blind to any positive aspect of his material; in the long run the painful insecurity of his mentors is only too likely to be transferred to his own consciousness, condemning him to permanent residence in a state of mental siege. Wilfrid Ward proved that such a defensive posture was outdated some fifty years ago. In fact, nothing is so likely to affect the attitude of our pluralist society toward the Catholic as the Catholic's own attitude toward it. Those who look for bigotry and unfair discrimination are likely to find them without difficulty; those who proceed on generous assumptions about their associates improve thereby their chance of having the assumptions verified.



The most important reason for the exercise of tolerance and courtesy in dealing with those from whom we differ most profoundly is of course the law of charity. We all know in theory that the second greatest commandment does not apply exclusively to our contacts with the Catholic, or even with the Christian world. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, we are obliged to presume the good faith of everyone.

The seeker of truth, if genuine, will be glad to pursue it anywhere; certainly he will learn much from the brilliant and dedicated scholarship of many a contemporary American Protestant, Jew or secularist. If, by the mercy of God, we possess ultimate truth, we must nevertheless often bow our heads in admission that many are without it who have searched harder, and shown a deeper devotion to the search, than we have. For such we can surely feel only admiration and Christian love. To the extent of their competence we owe them professional respect as well.

Such are the attitudes that Catholic education might contribute to the dialogue. Our graduates can participate in the interests of the Church and of society only if they wish to do so, if they possess a confident and deeply personal faith, if they have learned to understand the minds of their non-Catholic neighbors, and to respect their persons. They will recognize the competence of those who possess it, in whatever field they do possess it, no matter how deeply they may differ from such people about matters of still greater importance. They will be courteous because they are confident, not in themselves, but in the ultimate security of the truth which has been entrusted to them. They will scorn the cheap victories of sarcasm, and they will not be perpetually pulling out the sword to defend *Mater Ecclesia* when no one has yet attacked her.

Of course, they will certainly recognize error, and face up to real disagreement. But they will be far more interested in finding points of sympathy and understanding, since it is from these that the dialogue must proceed.

This much is certain: it would be hard to overestimate the dialogue. For the dialogue may provide a better opportunity than any human history has so far recorded to share divine truth—and to share this truth with the freely responding intellects of free men.

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DOUBLE FIGHT FOR SCHOOLS

CONGRESS had already, when this was written, re-passed and the President had re-vetoed a "housing bill," which included appropriations of $300,000,000 to be used as loans for college dormitories and classrooms. Also in the Congressional program, if it gets out of committee, there is again a bill to provide building appropriations on a serious, new-economy scale at the lower grade and high-school levels; and only belatedly were plans for federal teacher-payment appropriations postponed.

At close range, a Congressman or citizen can argue bills such as these from dozens of angles. The more inclusive a view one takes, however, taking account of a constant flow of reports from all over the country and the world—from Kerala, India, to Morningside Heights, to Watertown, Ohio—the more inescapable it appears that these debates and votes are part of a comprehensive interlocked drive (1) to eliminate non-public, or non-governmental education, and (2) to establish a "national" control, in place of parental and local control, over the residual public schools on a unitary material and philosophic basis.

A public school, like all schools, is supposed to be a friend and auxiliary of all the families in its area. The source of authority and seat of responsibility for bringing up children are the parents. Public schools have the tremendously difficult task of providing a suitable education for families with many very different backgrounds and interests and ideals. This is a basic reason for limiting school districts so that the problems and variations can be restricted geographically, at least. There is no just or convenient reason why our local school has to reflect the wrong opinions of some village atheist downstate in Illinois.

Political, social and philosophical enthusiasts are constantly trying to take over the public school system for their own purposes. Specifically, in this country, the public schools appear to be constantly pushed into a position more intolerably and intolerantly anti-Christian. At the center of the nation for example, "Wisconsin public schools have been ordered to stop released time religious instruction programs because the State Attorney General has said they violate the state constitution."

To the West, in California, Professor Richard LaPiere of Stanford University demonstrates how ". . . the end result of these and other related developments has been the creation of a fairly closed system of teacher recruitment, training, and accrediting that is impervious to correction from without and generates only nominal criticism within its own ranks." Professor LaPiere describes in the title of his book what he believes this "closed system" forces on youth; that is, "The Freudian Ethic, an Analysis of the Subversion of American Character."

Eastward in New York, Jacques Barzun writes: "At present, our 'liberal' teachers' college products show the bare makings of a totalitarian force—the zeal for inducing 'the right attitude'; a thick-skinned intolerance toward all who doubt or criticize so much goodness; and a special language, a flatulent Newspeak, which combines self-righteousness with a permanent fog, so that its users are invulnerable—others abide our question, they are free. The politics of the adjustment curriculum, at any rate, are clear: it is manipulation by sentiment and dubious authority, exercised by the least educated and most vapid minds of the nation."

Professor Barzun, surprisingly, is Provost of Columbia University, whose free-wheeling Teachers' College gives constant proof of leading the hardest forces of scholastic totalitarianism. Its summer message, emanating from a Teachers' College conference on rural education, included this dictum: "From an educational, democratic and financial viewpoint, duplicate educational systems are wasteful and inherently undemocratic. The expansion of duplicate school systems on a sectional and nation-wide scale constitutes a very grave threat to the continuing progress and improvement of the democratic school system."

Thus are private, parochial, and "sectional," and all but one system of government schools attacked in an announcement which inherently indicates how *the* surviving *system* would suffer the ruthless corruption of concepts like "progress" and "democratic" to mean realities closer to degeneration and dictatorship.

Happily, a news report from Ohio gives a lighter toned counterpoint to the usual academic victory cries. The Watertown school board of that State, in rather unique circumstances, has hired four Missionary Sisters of the Assumption—Catholic nuns—to teach in their public school. Last year the Sisters were given emergency certificates by county school authorities, and this summer they took the proper courses the authorities told them to take for further certification and rehiring. Now the higher authorities demur, listing eleven objections to the way the set-up existed last year, although admitting that not one of the objections presents a condition in itself unlawful. There is wry amusement in observing these modest, dedicated teachers make the grim, doctrinaire bosses of the public schools squirm and twist to find a defense against this isolated, bucolic threat of a Christian point of view.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

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An obsession with docility
tends to exalt mediocrity and passivity

Obedience and Scholarship

by JUSTUS GEORGE LAWLER

OBEDIENCE has often been defined by pious writers as the keystone of the spiritual edifice; yet its unwarranted extension into the intellectual realm may entail grave dangers.

A hundred years ago Newman wrote of the subsumption of the role of faith by obedience as a characteristically Protestant error: "When Catholics speak of faith they are contemplating the existence of a gift which Protestantism does not even imagine. Faith is a spiritual sight of the unseen; and since in matter of fact Protestantism does not import this sight, does not see the unseen, has no experience of this habit, this act of the mind—therefore since it retains the word 'faith,' it is obliged to find some other meaning for it; and its common, perhaps its commonest, idea is that faith is substantially the same as obedience; at least that it is the impulse, the motive of obedience, or the fervour and heartiness which attend good works. Faith is illuminative, not operative; it does not force obedience, though it increases responsibility; it heightens guilt, it does not prevent sin."

Not until recent years did other Catholic scholars recognize in this reduction of faith to obedience one of the fundamental causes of the eclipse of Catholic thought in the modern world. Père Régamey has written eloquently of the abuse of obedience and its effect on Catholic piety and more particularly on the fine arts; M. Maritain has discussed it in relation to theology and philosophy; and Père Congar has related it to the general life of the Church in terms that deserve to be quoted here: "In a still more general way—one is almost able to say, more radically—Catholics, and especially the men of the Church, are formed and trained to an obedience *ad litteram*. This is a very great force, serving marvelously in bringing about submission to what is established (*donné*) in the Church, by which are translated the imperative demands of her constitutive principles. But it sometimes gives place to an excess: that of considering in practice that there is only one virtue, obedience—even as there is only one sin, that of the flesh. This habituates both clergy and faithful to a certain lack of initiative, even where life would demand that it be taken. One might even go to the extreme of conceiving religion as something ready-made, completely determined from on high, extrinsic to the personal decisions of conscience."

Within the school this abuse of obedience may take the form of a suffocating uniformity and conformity which, while occasionally tolerating free discussion, quite frequently interdicts free action, even where prudence would require it. One widely publicized example of this abuse concerned a very outspoken, but undeniably competent, professor of philosophy at a Catholic university who was indirectly forbidden to determine for himself the content of a series of radio addresses. The professor in question had frequently espoused causes at variance with certain accepted ideas of many "typical" Catholic laymen, but he had nevertheless consistently maintained a most faithful stand on religious principles. Following his refusal to submit to the arrogant demands of a cleric who was overstepping the bounds of authority and justice, the professor resigned his teaching position. There is probably some moral to be drawn from the fact that he was immediately offered a place on the faculty of one of the country's outstanding universities.

IN THIS CONTEXT, it may be advisable for administrators who are tempted to regard the teaching faculty as so many hired hands, to reflect on the medieval notion of knowledge as a *donum Dei* which a teacher may offer to his students freely, though it cannot be bought or sold. Because he has at his disposition a spiritual gift, the teacher cannot be regarded as a functionary who receives a salary for his work; like the priest, he can be given only an honorarium for his services. And because the teacher—again like the priest—is a minister of spiritual things, he has an obligation not primarily to such abstractions as "school" and "administration," but to his own intellectual integrity and to that of his students.

One wonders to how many administrations of Catholic colleges can be applied Newman's words regarding the attitude of the Irish bishops toward the laymen who supported him in his Irish university venture:

Mr. Lawler has been a frequent contributor to The Commonweal. This article is adapted from a forthcoming book by him, *The Catholic Dimension in Higher Education*, © The Newman Press, Westminster, Md.

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"They were treated like good little boys; were told to shut their eyes and open their mouths and take what we gave them—and this they did not relish." The tone of this remark of Newman explains a further declaration, which he made some years later, when he asserted that, if he were to open another school, he would insist that the masters be laymen.

With regard to the religious state itself, Père André Rabut has described the feelings of many young religious who, being subjected to an exaggerated notion of obedience, feel themselves destined to a life in which the personal gifts and the talents they would like to devote to the apostolate are going to atrophy from lack of exercise: "Almost all the virtues that are taught to a young novice seem to fall into the category of docility. Now, while admitting an absolute docility to God and a relative docility to those charged with guiding him, he would center more spontaneously his virtues on the idea of responsibility. Man, he believes, is primarily a being who must choose a mission, and be responsible for his choice before God; if necessary, before God alone. . . . He would like to be one of the long line which began with Jesus, with St. Paul, with the founders of the religious orders, and of which fearlessness is one of the most striking traits. . . . In St. Catherine of Siena and St. Joan of Arc, for examples, one finds convinced spirits who have not been docile in every sense of the word. A certain conception of docility is the equivalent of an abandonment before God of the vocation of man."

IN ANY educational undertaking an obsession with docility tends to exalt mediocrity and passivity, so that often the religious teacher who seeks to advance himself within the scope of his own field fears to propose any method or thesis which is not entirely conformed to the views of his superiors. In an environment where no prudent criticism of authority is possible, and where every novel or critical suggestion may brand its author as lacking in the spirit of obedience, it is certain no genuine research and no creative teaching can exist.

Within a faculty where such an attitude prevails the abuse of obedience tends to eliminate from positions of trust and responsibility capable independent thinkers, and to replace them by lackeys who, however dull and pedestrian they may be, are retained in office because they are, in administrative argot, "safe men." Toadyism may ensnare any organization based on a hierarchy of delegated authority, but it is a peculiarly imminent danger for organizations in which authority is sanctioned by religious vows.

One sometimes has the impression that provincial superiors are not disturbed by the fact that their appointees to administrative office often have the intellectual vision of Goethe's Wagner, and that they are

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therefore forces for reaction rather than for progress within a school. And in turn, these administrators seem little disturbed, in their pursuit of uniformity, that a truly great teacher, a teacher, for example, such as George Lyman Kittredge, might be excluded from their faculty on the grounds that his teaching methods were novel or that his appearance and actions were eccentric. "It must be said," wrote one of Newman's Oxford disciples, "that the wayward and eccentric must and will take their own course, and a university is sure to have a good many such men." It must also be said that the presence of such men, if their teaching is effective, generally indicates a liberal administration and an intellectually healthy faculty.

Finally, the abuse of obedience creates an atmosphere, within the student body of a school, in which the word "docile" loses its root meaning of "teachable," and takes on overtones of subservience and submission. The notion of student government in such a school becomes akin to the policy of the "guided democracies" in the Soviet empire; and the faculty, itself rendered impotent by this same abuse of obedience, rather than forming the students into independent thinkers and free agents, tends to make of them dispirited, acquiescent dullards who can neither act nor think without some positive injunction from authority.

This is one of the reasons, as the student magazine *Today* has often noted, why some employers prefer to hire Catholic graduates; it is not that they are more industrious, but simply that their inbred sense of submission will possibly keep them from agitating for better wages or better working conditions. This again suggests the schizoid character of some of our schools, in which the social encyclicals of Leo or Pius are taught in the classroom, while their effective realization and application in the marketplace are rendered impossible by the authoritarian and, one fears, reactionary formation imparted over four years of disciplined but uninspired training.

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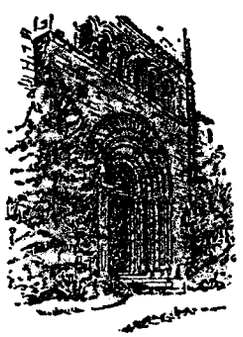

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THE SCREEN

OCTOBER SONG

THIS SEEMS to be the movies' year for romances between older men and young girls. There is nothing as extreme as "Lolita," which is still in the planning stage, but in July we saw "Middle of the Night," in which Fredric March, as a middle-aged garment manufacturer, wooed and won Kim Novak, as a neurotic divorcee in her twenties, with no promise of a happy future. Then more recently, there was "The Blue Angel," in which Curt Jurgens, as an aging and staid botany teacher, went wild over May Britt, as a youthful and flashy entertainer, and even married her before realizing how mismatched they were. And now comes "But Not for Me," a comedy romance with Clark Gable, as a theatrical producer unable to hide the fact that he's well along in his fifties, and twentyish Carroll Baker.

Out of fairness to the Broadway bigshot, it should be said that the romance isn't his idea at all, but when his attractive secretary (Miss Baker) starts chasing him, Gable is too flattered to run or to resist. His old friend (Lee J. Cobb), who's writing a play for him, and his ex-wife (Lilli Palmer), who hangs around to keep her eye on pill-taking Clark as well as her monthly alimony check, look at the producer as if he were proving there's no fool like an old fool.

The William Perlberg-George Seaton production of "But Not for Me" is quite handsome and well-cast. The script by John Michael Hayes has some amusing dialogue and situations, as when Lilli Palmer tries to impress Carroll that Clark is no youngster with early Gable photographs or with his birthday cake, which has so many candles it looks like the Chicago fire. Music is used especially well in the film, with Ella Fitzgerald's singing Gershwin's title tune, and the Typewriter Song conveying the hectic rush and bustle of re-writing a play, and "You Make Me Feel So Young", putting over the December-May theme. Unfortunately, Director Walter Lang never uses his cast and material to the fullest of their possibilities, and the comedy isn't as funny as it should be. For one thing, the picture never makes quite clear why Carroll goes so ardently for Clark when she has Barry Coe, as a handsome young actor, pursuing her. Furthermore, all the oldsters in the film out-act the youngsters. However, audiences who aren't too fussy may find "But Not for Me" for them.

MUCH FUNNIER and in keeping with its giddy subject matter is "Pillow Talk," a light, pleasant, screwball sort of comedy in which Doris Day and Rock Hudson wrangle over sharing a two-party telephone

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line before their interest in each other gets on a personal basis. The plot is pretty thin, but that doesn't matter too much since its only purpose is to get Doris over her antagonism toward Rock, who poses as a western rancher to woo her. Director Michael Gordon wisely lets his two leads kick up their heels and act as skittish as they wish with the jokes, which are both verbal and visual, and the entire cast come through in fine style. Miss Day, long adept at comedy, carries on in what is for her a new and sophisticated manner, being cool and indignant until the rancher melts her; while Hudson, who usually turns up in outdoor dramas or sentimental soap operas, exhibits a surprisingly light comedy touch that is exactly right for the breezy, wacky "Pillow Talk."

Producers Ross Hunter and Martin Melcher have backed up their stars with good-looking sets (since Miss Day portrays an interior decorator), some nice color photography and a fine supporting cast that includes Tony Randall, as Doris's hopelessly determined suitor, and Thelma Ritter as her hopelessly inebriated maid. Whenever "Pillow Talk" seems on the verge of exceeding good taste, it snaps back into line; its kidding includes making fun of itself occasionally, and the audience laughs with and at the cast who are clearly having such a good time for themselves. "Pillow Talk" could very well turn out to be one of the year's funniest movies.

I'M NOT SURE what effect a hopped-up melodrama like "The Big Operator" will have for the cause of Labor. It means to point out what a vicious, highly immoral racketeer is Little Joe Braun (Mickey Rooney) who uses goon tactics and exploits unions as a labor boss who has the organization and members in his power. The story concerns a couple of union members (Steve Cochran and Mel Torme) who refuse to kowtow to Little Joe and his methods. When Joe lies before a Senate Investigating Committee, Steve and Mel are aware of his perjury, and Joe has to get them in line or he's in serious trouble. Needless to say, the sterling characters played by Cochran and Torme refuse to accept a bribe. So Big Joe not only has his hoods work on Steve and Mel, but he also kidnaps Steve's little boy.

Perhaps some labor leaders have used Little Joe's methods, but as directed by Charles Haas the film goes so far with the rough stuff that violence seems to be used for violence's sake, and the whole thing becomes an exercise in uncontrolled terror. Except for Mamie Van Doren, who is miscast as Steve's wife, the acting is quite good, and as a slob with Little Caesar complexes Mickey Rooney is, as usual, especially effective. Nonetheless, the film is so overdone that no one will take it seriously.

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By WILLIAM DUNLEA

THE *Child of Montmartre* is the collective title given to this first English translation of three autobiographical fragments *(Le Petit Ami, In Memoriam, Amours)* by the late Paul Léautaud (1872-1956). (His death is moved up to 1955 in the jacket copy, which also errs on the side of frugality in all other vital statistics about the author almost totally unknown in this country.) This writer remained a literary curiosity until about six years before his death, when French radio audiences became familiar with his impious wit and provocative personality.

Apart from the brief notoriety of his early *roman liberties, Le Petit Ami,* Léautaud had called attention to himself chiefly by sniping at his contemporaries. Costumed like some nondescript rumpled dandy, —a weird skullcap that looked more like a knapsack and an inevitable checkered mantle—he seemed to want to set an official seal upon his arguable reputation as a misanthrope and misogynist. He was the illegitimate son of an actor turned prompter at the Comédie Française, and an actress who gave up the stage to marry another man. Three days after the boy's birth she abandoned him to the care of a father, who, sumptuous romancer that he was, wanted him even less; the only affection he remembered was that of the nursery-maid. At fifteen he was told to earn his keep.

Left to comtemplate himself as a blunder of passion, it is not surprising that he came to set an impossible premium on love and could never find satisfaction; nor that he should assess himself as rarely capable of carrying anything through in any field. His peculiar inflection is one of personal irony; it tempers the acerbity of these reminiscences and it informs his whole restrictive vision of life. *In Memoriam,* his scorching appraisal of the father who never opened his heart to him, is a unique little masterpiece of personal irony.

The Child of Montmartre, however, is but a sidelight on the literary career of Paul Léautaud. These were his only works of any fictional pretensions—he is the only "character" to emerge fully from them—and his verse is undistinguished. His voluminous journal may prove worthy to be ranked with the Goncourt journals, but only a small portion of it has seen publication. Until more of it appears, Léautaud will be most respectfully remembered for his thirty years of brilliant critical and editorial service on the *Mercure de France,* and as a free-

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wheeling devil's advocate to the modern theater (under the *nom de plume* of Maurice Boissard) whose only peer was George Jean Nathan.

Le Petit Ami contains the sort of insolent "confessions" that only certain Parisian litterateurs can write. They reflect the superficial dissidence, frivolous nihilism and orderly libertinage that were more expressive of the spirit of *la belle epoque* than the manifestoes of the artistic revolution. This spirit was a decadent distortion of Barres' ethic of freedom which reiterated the primal duty to self. Deriding while dazzling the bourgeoisie was the most popular literary game; it was also the safest.

In these fluid memoirs of a young man of thirty, Léautaud reveals himself as preeminently a scandalizer; he fails, even as he accuses the great masters (whom he dismisses for preciosity) of failing, to touch the heart. Yet the sincerity of his egoism—"moi seul m'interesse" are his most famous and his truest words—dignifies his claim to be an heir of the eighteenth century *petits maitres:* it is a sincerity that is never ponderous. He writes with savage candor of his emotional extremes and ambiguities. But rarely has the mask of independence accented profounder insecurities. He dwells on two preoccupations: his conception of literary sincerity (only Stendhalian spontaniety is tolerable) and his filial attraction to women who resemble his mother in their easy virtue as well as their easy beauty. Indeed, the grand infatutation of his life is "that delicious woman," mama, whom he meets only twice—but what occasions are they!—over a period of thirty years.

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JULIEN GRACQ, a winner of the Goncourt Prize for an earlier work, has written a deceptively quiet and disturbing novel.

The story, what there is of it, begins in the fall of 1939, the period of the "phony" war, and ends in May 1940. Everyone who has served in the Armed Forces is familiar with the phrase, "Hurry up and wait." The bulk of M. Gracq's book is about the waiting. The central character, Lieutenant Grange, is given command of a blockhouse in the middle of a forest near the Belgian border close to the Meuse River. "In case of attack, the engineers would fall back to a position in front of Les Falizes and blow up the road. The mission of the blockhouse was to destroy the tanks trapped by this demolition and to provide information as to the enemy's movements."

And so Lieutenant Grange and his three subordinates, a corporal and two privates, waiting for the enemy's movements, settle into something of a peasant life, "slowly vegetating at one of the least sensitive nerve endings within the war's great body." From the very beginning, and without needing the hindsight history has provided, one feels that the war has been lost. Grange feels that he might have found a desert island within the war but he cannot credit his feeling. "It seemed to Grange that the earth itself was yellowing with disease, that time was working there, underneath, with a slow fever: they walked upon it as on a corpse that was beginning to smell."

Now Grange, who is a Poe enthusiast, rather likes all this. He no longer enjoys the news from battalion headquarters and becomes "like those solitary creatures who have left a mother or an older sister somewhere and who slyly avoid the postman everyday." This is the mood from which Grange, on his balcony, watches the forest; he watches closely, alertly and he describes what he sees with such delicacy and inventiveness that one is reminded of a dying man who has accumulated rare and lovely objects of art and who can find nothing better to do in his last hours than admire them with greater intensity than ever. Grange recognizes this in himself, recognizes a "certain complicity. There was a confused but powerful charm in sprawling in this besotted boat that had thrown its helm, then its oars overboard—the curious charm of *drifting with the current.*"

The story that Gracq tells is incidental to the mood. It is true that Lieutenant Grange has an intense love affair with a child-widow named Mona whom he encounters on one of the forest paths, but the affair has a pertinence, not to the story, but to Grange's mood. For a spell, his fascination with Mona distracts him from his contemplation of the doom impending. Then spring comes, the Germans advance and he sends Mona away. The Germans advance so rapidly and in such force that all orders become mere scraps of paper. The engineers do not blow up the road and the mission of the blockhouse, to

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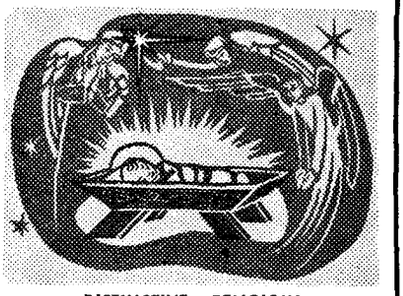

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destroy tanks, is realized by a direct hit on one German truck, after which the blockhouse is shelled. Two of the men are killed and Lieutenant Grange is wounded. He escapes from the blockhouse, but is unable to make it back to his own lines, wherever they might have been, and ends in Mona's deserted cottage, where he stretches out, pulls a blanket over his head and falls asleep.

This reverie in the forest teases speculation. In the course of the book, Grange contrasts the wars of 1914 and of 1939. In 1914, men had left home with the idea of returning for the harvest; in 1939, no sooner had they abandoned home than "the life which still enveloped them in all its warmth seemed tainted with a swift, an irremediable aging—withered in the stalk, already too white for harvest." If not Europe, then a European era finally expired in 1940.

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JOURNEY TO THE ENDS OF TIME. Vol. I: Lost in the Dark Wood. By Sacheverell Sitwell. Random. $7.50.

By MAX COSMAN

MR. SITWELL is a traveler, but with a difference. Journeys for him have never been incursions into hinterlands as they were, say for Graham Greene or Evelyn Waugh. Nor have they been the exercises in mastering wild areas that contemporary adventurers from Peter Fleming to Eric Newby have indulged in. They have not even been the professional expeditions for local color made by a Somerset Maugham in his heyday or still being made by a William Sansom.

No, Mr. Sitwell's goings have been *sui generis*. They have been those of the peregrinating esthete, the darling of the kind of drawing room in which women (and men too), in spite of T. S. Eliot's irony, rightly come and go talking of Michelangelo.

Mr. Sitwell's credentials for the role of esthetic culturist are given

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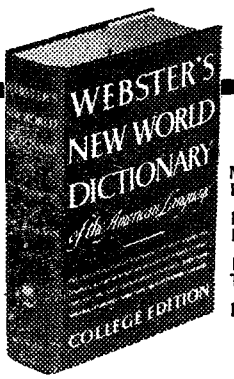

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best in his own words. "It is my belief," he tells us in his Note of Explanation, "that I have informed myself of nearly all works of art in the known world. I cannot think of anything considerable that is missing. Where I have not been in person, I have read and studied. I have heard most of the music of the world, and seen nearly all the paintings." It only remains to add that the idiosyncrasies critics have pointed out in this equipment do not invalidate their respect for it.

No civilized country, then, that is country with accumulated treasures of art, remains alien to Mr. Sitwell. Naturally, he has traveled much in his own land, in Europe of course, and in many parts of the West and the East. One mystic terrain, however, as writings like his *Dance of the Quick and the Dead, Splendours and Miseries,* and *The Hunters and the Hunted* indicate, has been intriguing him for years.

Lost in the Dark Wood, the first of two volumes called *Journey to the Ends of Time,* shows that he has finally gone his way to it and begun charting its velleities and its vastitude. The "demi-world," for that is the name he gives to it, is no ordinary place. It is one where thought is made "substantive" and where realism and a Rimbaudian hallucination combine to recaptitulate whatever is significant in one's life.

Chaucer chose some pilgrims on a trip as a framework for his review of existence; Cervantes, a knight-errant in time of change; Dante, a medieval arrangement of humanity. Mr. Sitwell finds *his* in an assumption of death with an outward-bound prevision of what transpires thereafter.

The plot chosen gives him an opportunity to introduce symbolic characters like the Icelander and the Green Boy and Girl as well as creatures like the Serpent and the Huge Fish. It makes him free of allegoric constructs like the Haywain, the Ship of Fools, or the Towers. It allows him to go from considerations of time, religion, the soul, and evolution to recollections of things read, to experiences of his own, and, votary of art that he is,

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to appreciations of creative workers than range through Byron, Picasso, Bach, Mozart, Velázquez, and Bosch to Sharaku.

Not least, it lets him tell us of himself: his recurrent nightmare (to see from a height to huge fishes below), his prejudice against caverns (the Blue Grotto of Capri is the first), his yearning for his mother (he lost her when he was twelve), his near-sightedness, his distaste for the skin of milk, and, rather unexpectedly, his sense of failure as writer (this from a man who has published better than three score works).

A fantastic book, this *Lost in the Dark Wood,* and an original one too, despite colorings taken from predecessors as various as *The Divine Comedy, Finnegans Wake,* or *The Human Age.*

How shall we categorize its many-leveled profusion? To start with, it is a baroque ballet. It is also a cornucopia of curiosa. It is not wrong to think of it as a surrealistic tour, a sort of existential pilgrimage. Last but not least, certainly from the standpoint of apologetics, it is on the one hand a pagan's envoy, and on the other a rationalist's eschatology. For Mr. Sitwell says roundly that he is "Christian neither by instinct nor inclination," that he does not "believe in an after-life," and that most decidedly he has "no belief in the pains and punishments of hell."

In these utterances, however, it should be noted, he has no intention of shocking those of assured faith. All he wants to do is to report himself aright. Having reached his watershed he feels that he is able, as he tells us in a concluding, poetic paragraph, "to see down to both sides."

Like many thoughtful men these days, across the Channel and across the Atlantic too, he does just that. In speaking out according to his lights, he is hardly religious in any traditional sense but neither is he apathetic to the problems and the mysteries. On the contrary, like his admired William Blake he converses with the eternal realities that exist in the human imagination. And his conscience is tender.

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The Near Tragic

SHORT STORIES BY PIRANDELLO. Translated by Lily Duplaix. Simon & Schuster. $3.95.

By MARIAN SELDIN

MOST VOLUMES of short stories involve for the reviewer a built-in hazard in that space forbids the particular comment and justice the general. However, these twenty-two stories mitigate the difficulty because Pirandello's preoccupation in them, as in his plays and novels, is remarkably constant. Human experience, as he saw it, is at best ironic, at worst not quite tragic, but rather frustrating. For men, who need to communicate, are unheard, misunderstood or, when grasped a little too well, made vulnerable to those who wish them ill.

The stories gain their force from the fact that the anguish their characters endure comes through human acts, willed acts proceeding from motives not fully understood and leading to consequences not entirely foreseen. Pirandello's people, then, are fully men and women, not mechanisms subject to drives nor pawns in the clutches of the doomsters. This is true even of the Sicilian stories in which environment, the impoverished land pockmarked and contaminated by sulphur mines, plays a significant role. In "Fumes," for instance, Don Mattia destroys the green hill he loves to benefit the mines he hates, but he is driven to the act not by an inexorable nature but through the malice of an enemy who, having injured him once, can justify himself only by injuring again.

The short story, though, is a limiting form, particularly for an author whose concern is just this sort of probing into what men make of the human condition. Thus, none of these stories has to me the impact of *The Outcast*, one of the best of his novels, or of the famous "Six Characters in Search of an Author." The best of them are the longer ones, those which approach *novella*, for in them Pirandello has time not

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only to establish character—which he does with finesse even in the shorter pieces—but also to prepare adequately for his ironic insight.

A few of the shorter pieces, such as "Cinci" or "Escape," which focus on only one character are virtuoso achievements, so brilliantly do they marshal mood and event to achieve their bitter moments of truth. And those lighter in mood, like "Watch and Ward," an ironic anecdote, or "Who Pays the Piper . . . ," a "folk" tale, are wryly successful. However, some of the more serious ones too short to permit the pathetic or the ironic to make itself felt gradually end by being only sentimental. Or worse, they end falsely, invoking an irony not validly present. In "A Mere Formality" a sick man's stratagem to deny his innocent wife her equally innocent lover after his own death seems to me to be inadequate to its end. And Lucietta, the appealing young widow in "The Rose," in spite of her naive frivolity and her neighbors' malicious willingness to take advantage of it, *could* possibly come through happily, marry the man who loves her instead of being consigned to perpetual matelessness through an incident essentially trivial. We suffer an inundation of authentic agony and ought not also have to endure insistence upon anguish where it need not be.

But on the whole the stories are rich in justified emotion, in moments of acute sympathy for the plight especially of women and, most tenderly, of the old. And Pirandello's pervasive awareness of the absurd shows itself most effectively in his serious pieces where incidents which out of context would be Mack Sennet comedy serve to intensify rather than to mitigate the tragic.

REVIEWERS

William Dunlea is a free-lance critic living in New York.

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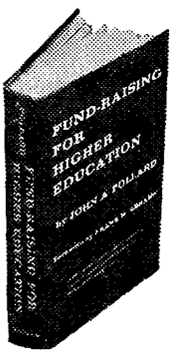

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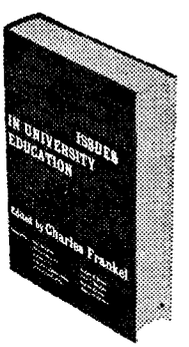

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ART

Inside Abstract Art

NO MATTER how "abstract art" is described—as a sign of spirituality, a materialistic "purism," an escape from reality, a return to primitivism, a dehumanization of art, or the logical extreme of individualism—it is, without a doubt, the pervasive tendency of contemporary Western Art. "The development of a non-figurative art is the major phenomenon of our epoch," says Marcel Brion from France, and this remark might be made with even more conviction in other countries not blessed by the ambiguous genius of Picasso. Even when (as right now) people are beginning to speak of a "new humanism" and to fairly grasp at straws in pointing to oblique references to nature or to the human form in contemporary artists, it is more indicative of how far we have traveled on the road to abstraction than anything else. Even those artists (like the "romantic realists" in our own country) who have kept up a moody dialogue with representation, have done so against the background of abstraction, and the most recalcitrant member of the looking-at-pictures public has been to some extent affected by this tendency, so that he looks at pictures rather differently than if "abstractions" had never been painted, sculpted or put together.

Mondrian's dictum: "We must destroy the particular form" as a step to "reveal, as far as possible, the universal aspect of life" is perhaps the most clear declaration of the intention of "pure" abstract art. Despite the Marxist ring of this declaration, it has its roots deep in classical art; when Poussin's figures lost themselves in his landscape and, over two centuries later, when Cezanne subjected the emptied landscape to analysis, important steps had already been taken on the road to "pure" abstraction in modern Western art history. "Pure" abstraction after World War II seems the strongest element in British painting, where the elegance and clarity that are its peculiar virtues can be seen in the work of such artists as Victor Pasmore and Ben Nicolson. In America our sculptors have been the artists most susceptible to this aesthetic: the exquisite constructions of Lippold, and the more lyrical geometry of de Rivera are examples of it; Calder's creations resist a category because of their dynamic originality, but they too have a certain relation.

In contrast to the classical strain in this contemporary phenomenon, of which Mondrian was the epitome, there is a romantic strain in present-day abstract art of which Kandinsky was the "prophet"; it makes use of all the work done by the Impressionists, Expressionists, Fauves and (most importantly) by the Surrealists through their emphasis on the inspiration of the unconscious, of "automatism," etc. It is the romantic strain that accounts for "tachisme" in France and which is uppermost in painting in our own country where it is called "abstract expressionism" or "action painting." These artists achieve intense emotional effects through a romantic abstract spontaneity. Sam Hunter says of de Kooning, one of our outstanding "action" painters, that he "approaches representation from the reverse side of creation, by giving full scope to impulse and accident, rather than by submitting to the control of objective reality"; it may be possible, as many people hope, that representation will finally burst forth from this spontaneous "reverse" creativity. In the meantime it appears to be the most vital element in the world of abstract art, to spill over and suffuse the work of many essentially non-abstract artists, and to connect the plastic arts with the world of art in general today.

It is easy enough to see in looking back that there is an "atmosphere" that links the arts of a period—that there is an elegant, deracinated air about both Whistler and Henry James, for instance—but it is much more difficult to find coherence in the present. The eager synthesist is

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probably too engulfed in impressions to distinguish the men from the boys, much less trace those relations that after the lapse of decades seem to declare themselves so strongly. Furthermore, even if it is clear enough that abstract expressionism in America, its counterpart "tachisme" in France, and that impulse that Sir Herbert Read refers to as the poetic "inscape" that absorbs many British contemporary artists (especially sculptors) are all abstract and romantically spontaneous in style, it is also true that distinguished individual artists work outside the main current. However, the impulse of romantic spontaneity is indeed one that pervades the creative atmosphere in the Western World today; the origin of it is perhaps too easily traced to the discovery of the "subconscious" and the powerful effect of unconscious motivations on man's behavior, which both appear to absolve him from responsibility and leave him helpless and fulminating, an English Angry Young Man, a French Existentialist or an American Beatnik —anti-Heroes all, but protesting their role in distinctive native accents. These anti-Heroes really appear to set up an agonized protest, not so much against the tribulations of modern life, as at having their individuality dissolved by analysis; they, and the contemporary abstract artist as well.

The new orthodoxy is indeed abstract art, but there has been a "boring from within" and it tends more and more to be intensely personal, subjective abstraction; outside of the constructionists and geometric abstractionists (disciples of "pure" abstract art) the post World War II artist is more self-centered than ever. As artistic forms have become more abstract, artistic inspiration has become more "particular," and the abstract artist has surreptitiously suffered the "dehumanized" forms with human emotion. This seems to indicate that the "new humanism" now heralded will be quite different from the old, in which the outside of "man" rather than the inside of "a man" was the subject of aesthetic communication. BETTY KAUFMAN.

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